

BARLEY HALL

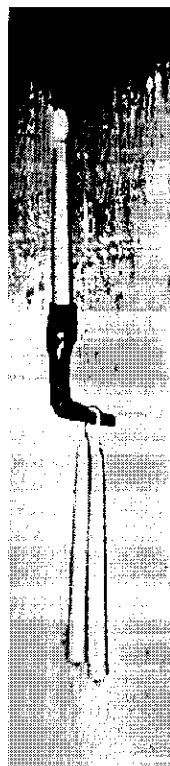
by Terras MacRorie
Shire of the Standing Stones, Calontir

The fall of 1993 has shown an interesting new tourist attraction directly related to the basic aims of Sacred Spaces. Located in York, England, Barley Hall is a restored 16th Century town house. The introduction from the pamphlet is as follows:

BARLEY HALL is a restored late medieval town house, which the York Archeological Trust is refurbishing as it might have appeared in about 1483. This recreation of a medieval household is an ongoing process, so that the appearance of the interior is continually changing as we move towards our goal. No permanent guide book to the building and its contents is therefore yet possible: but this pamphlet is intended to provide a list of the items on view at the time of your visit. First, however, something about the history of the building...

The timbers felled for the house were cut about 1360, that date set by tree ring dating. The original owners were Augustinian canons of Nostell Priory, in West Yorkshire. In about 1450, a new two-story section was added with a great hall and rooms for food preparation. In 1466, the canons leased the house to William Snawsell, who became Lord Mayor of York in 1468. The reconstruction is being focused on this period because of the exceptional detail available in wills and documents of Snawsell.

Between 1987 and 1992 the site was excavated and the timbers reconstruction to the actual proportions.



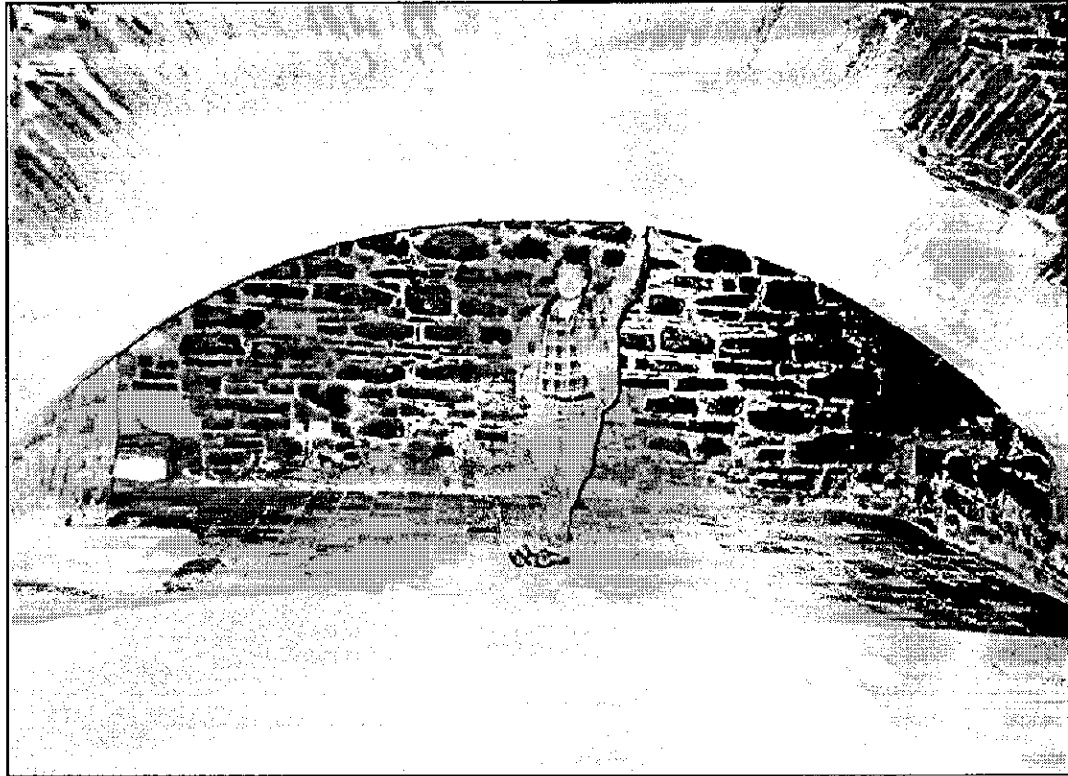
While all of this is interesting enough to warrant a look-see, there is an aspect of the display that makes it ever so much more. This house, which you can walk through, is filled with pottery, furniture, tiles, and wall hangings which YOU CAN TOUCH. You are allowed to pick up the recreations of 13th pottery—done “the way they were done back then” by artisans hired by the York Archaeological Trust. The wall hangings are hand spun, hand dyed, hand sewn—the works. The hall is a monumental effort of volunteers, artisans, and the York Archaeological Trust to make this place fantastic.

York already claims the Jorvik Viking Centre as a primary display, but to people who are interested in seeing something more than recreated wax figures in still scenes, Barley Hall will capture them for hours. The furniture is sometimes uncomfortable, but the whole place is well worth a visit, perhaps even a trip to England simply to see it.

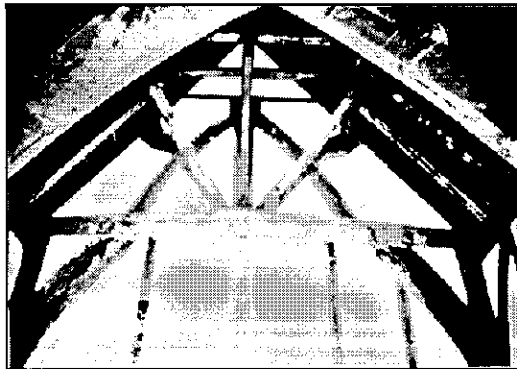
And so as not to leave anyone wanting for information, here's the address and phone number of the folks who work this aspect of the trust.

The Barley Hall Office
Coffee Yard
York
Y01 2AW

Telephone: (0904) 652398



Above: The author stands inside the an enormous medieval hearth (which is actually in Doune castle in Scotland, nowhere near Barley Hall. But it was a nice picture, so what the heck.).



Facing Page—*top: a stool from Barley Hall; bottom: a simple wall-mounted candle holder, complete with hand-dipped candles.*

This Page—*Above: framework from Barley Hall; At right: a doorway in the hall.*

